



Virginia Resource-Use Education Council

June 3, 2004



Wintergreen

Members Present:

Jeff Kirwan, VA Cooperative Extension and VT College of Natural Resources
Suzanne Kirk, Science Museum of Virginia
Suzie Gilley, VA Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries
Ann Regn, Virginia Office of Environmental Education
@ VA Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Carol Zokaite, VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation (DCR)
Lane Guilliams, Conservation Education Specialist at DCR
Jennifer Buff, Smithsonian Conservation and Research Center (CRC)
Jim Firebaugh, Virginia Dept. of Education, Middle School Instruction
Tim Taglauer, National Park Service
Bill Portlock, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Barry Fox, VA Cooperative Extension and Virginia State University
Susan Haynes, VA Institute of Marine Science
Tamra Willis, Mary Baldwin College
Denny Casey, VA Museum of Natural History at @ Martinsville
Sonya Wolen, Danville Science Center, Science Museum of VA, Assistant Director

Guests Present:

Marion Lobstein, Flora of Virginia Project
Katie Register, Longwood University, Clean Virginia Waterways Director
Brian Day, North American Association of Environmental Education
& International Institute for Environmental Communication
Nicole Vachon, Canaan Valley Institute, Virginia Coordinator
Shelby Laubhan, Chesapeake Bay Program, Team Development
Angela Neilan, Virginia Office of Environmental Education @ DEQ
Virginia Witmer, Virginia Coastal Program @ DEQ
Llyn Sharp – Virginia Tech Science Outreach Program
Beth Hansen – Friends of Chesterfield's Riverfront

INTRODUCTIONS

Suzie Gilley, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with an icebreaker activity. Many new members and guests were present, so this provided a welcome opportunity for introductions and announcements.

Nicole Vachon works for the Canaan Valley Institute. Her area extends from Loudon to Lee County, to include all of the karst region of Virginia. The Institute's focus is FWSSL, or Flooding, Water supply, , and Land use planning.

Lane Guilliams has filled Dawn Shank's position as Conservation Education Specialist at DCR in Richmond. Lane will also coordinate the Adopt a Stream program.

Jim Firebaugh mentioned that he is working on implementation of the Green School legislation called for in 2004 Senate Bill 315. The full text of the approved legislation is available at <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?041+ful+SB315ER>

Tim Taglauer is almost done compiling a classroom-based stewardship curriculum. McGackeysville schools have field-tested the activities.

The Smithsonian CRC has entered a partnership with the Western Cape Education Center in South Africa. The goal is teaching literacy skills with environmental lessons. They hope to carry the teacher training they develop back to Virginia schools.

Marion Lobstein has taught at the Northern Virginia Community College in Manassas for 30 years. She is also an adjunct professor at UVA's Blandy Farm State Arboretum where she teaches a Field Botany class. She has recently developed a CD on the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay.

Katie Register coordinates the Annual Coastal Cleanup, a water quality litter prevention program of Clean Virginia Waterways. She teaches in the Biology Department at Longwood College.

Jeff Kirwan mentioned that there is a massive influx of new employees in Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) after early retirement packages were offered during state budget cuts. As a result, we presently have the youngest staff in VCE since the inception of Cooperative Extension in the 1920's.

Sue Kirk is the Educational Program Coordinator for Science Museum of Virginia. SMV's official VRUEC member, Eugene Maurakis, is in Greece doing fish studies. The Science Museum is planning a new science center along the Potomac River in Prince William County called Belmont Bay. This facility is scheduled to open in 5 years.

Sonia Wolen reported that the Danville Science Center, situated right on the Dan River, is expanding its museum in partnership with another Danville museum. There will soon be more opportunities for environmental education on site.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) has 5 marine science educators for middle school and high school audiences. They lost their elementary educator due to budget cuts, so their elementary program is mainly web-based resources for now. VIMS will offer a genetics course MS548 (marine science) that will study applications of molecular markers in marine science. This is a 3-day, one credit course. This year's "species of special interest" is oysters, in cooperation with TOGA (Tidewater Oyster Gardening Association). More information is available at www.vims.edu

Virginia Witmer – Coastal resources protection management on behalf Virginia's Coastal Resources Management Program headquartered at DEQ. Special projects include Virginia Oyster Heritage Program, Seaside Heritage Program Cecil the seahorse to be unveiled at Smithsonian's Folklife Festival this summer. I

Brian Day has been very active with NAAEE for the last 10 years, and his career spans 30 years in the environmental education arena. He now resides in Virginia and has formed a new non-profit: the International Institute for Environmental Communication. The focus of his new publication, *Applied Environmental Education and Communication* is behavior change. This publication is available at <http://www.aeec.org/>

Ann Regn announced the addition of two new members of her staff: Kris Jarvis is the Project WET Trainer and Angela Neilan is the Community Involvement Specialist. Ann hopes to renew the annual EE conference. Please send Ann input regarding your ideas for time of year and focus. One idea for a theme is linking formal education to community partners. Virginia is still in the running for a national capacity building grant from EPA.

Denny Casey has a new role as the Director of Education and Public Programs at Virginia Museum of Natural History @ Martinsville. He worked with DEQ on the Virginia Water Resources issue of *Virginia Explorer* magazine. *Your Backyard Classrooms, Mountain edition* is done. He is ready to start the Piedmont edition soon. VMNH will open their new building in October 2005. VMNH is an affiliate with the Fredericksburg museum and Discovery Center in Shenandoah Valley. They will have distance-learning possibilities at the new building in Martinsville.

Tamra Willis, Mary Baldwin College, just received a SHEV grant for "Reading on the River." The goal is literacy using the environment as a catalyst for learning, with focus on a field trip experience.

Beth Hansen shared that the Friends of Chesterfield's Riverfront are working to sustain what they have already started with teachers in Chesterfield County. Many teachers were trained in Project WET and several schools are now Virginia Naturally Exemplary Schools.

DGIF has a new watershed poster being produced by their GIS section for all 4th and 6th grade teachers. They have received a Chesapeake Bay license plate grant for Carol Heiser to do Outdoor Classroom Institutes for 75 teachers in 3 locations this year. Suzie Gilley is busy producing a series of videos. The latest is on brook trout.

Treasurer's Report: VRUEC received a new NOAA grant for the Chesapeake Bay Academy. VRUEC will also receive \$25,000 from DCR to go into the Virginia Naturally Classroom grant account.

The minutes from February meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Virginia Naturally (VaN): Sarah Portlock is working as a summer intern at DEQ's Office of EE. Jennifer Comfort is the Classroom Grants Coordinator and updates the www.vanaturally.com website. The website receives 1,500-2,000 hits per month on the main home page. They plan to remove the EE directory since it is so outdated and will not update it. They are working with Virginia Tech and the Canaan Valley Institute to set up a new searchable system to catalog resources. For new information, they've added a link to "What's New" on the home page. After 12 years, 25 Ways to Help Virginia's Environment is being overhauled and redesigned. This time it will be a brochure that will open up to poster size. Suzie asked that bookmarks be mailed to VRUEC members along with copies of new brochure. The information on the brochure is also available at <http://www.vanaturally.com/waystohelp.html>.

VRUEC sent out 4,000 letters to teachers who are NSTA members. This mailing included watershed posters and advertised the Outdoor Classroom Institutes and VaN classroom grants.

Chessie: Susan Haynes from VIMS shared two internet resources, BRIDGE and CHESSIE. Let VIMS know of anything that needs to be added to either website.

The Bridge Website, www.marine-ed.org/bridge, is an Ocean Sciences Teacher Resource Center. VIMS is a COSEE (Centers for Ocean Science Education Excellence) partner supported by Sea Grant funds.

Chessie is a mini-BRIDGE website that narrows information to the Chesapeake Bay.

Susan is the president-elect of MAMEA (Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association). Barry Fox is the editor of MAMEA's membership publication, Masthead. The MAMEA conference this year is Oct 29-30, 2004 in Corolla, NC. Susan invited everyone to attend and to consider presenting. Information on presenting is available at www.mamea.org.

NSTA - Ann announced that we should hear soon on which NSTA session proposals have been accepted. More than 125 proposals were submitted for the Watershed Strand, 80% from Virginia. They are expecting 3,000 people to attend this conference in Richmond this December. The Science Museum of Virginia (SMV) is hosting a social event the night of Dec. 3rd. If you couldn't afford an exhibit for this conference, there may be exhibit space available through SMV for that one evening event.

Jim Firebaugh commented that the number of watershed proposals reflects the amount of work VRUEC members and the greater education community have put into meaningful watershed education.

HOUSSE –Jim handed out two documents explaining HOUSSE and High-Quality Professional Development (HQPDP) Criteria. You can access this information at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/suptsmemos/2004/1049.html> and <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/nclb/HQPDPcriteria4-04.pdf>

New licensure regulations came out last June. They were supposed to be approved after 18 months through the APA process. The Board of Education will most likely come out with a new set of licensure regulations to meet the new federal guidelines. So the process will start again next fall, with new reg's being submitted to APA next spring. If the new regulations are released this fall, this is just a time for familiarization, not public comment. The reg's still have to go through the Attorney General's Office and the Dept. of Planning and Budget. After that, there will be a 60-day window of public hearings when the Office of Teacher Licensure will be receiving formal written comment and email messages via their website. Input then goes to the Advisory Board on Teacher Licensure who will make recommendations to the Board of Education. The Board of Education can then make changes, and the final regulations go into effect.

Teachers do have to have HQPD every year. There is no EE endorsement in Virginia. EE has overlap into many subject areas. However, there is an endorsement for environmental science.

The intent of HQPD criteria is to move away from one-shot professional development experiences and make them more sustainable, content-heavy support programs for teachers. Carol Zokaites asked if this would affect historical requests for professional development days by local school systems. Jim affirmed that these sorts of requests should continue.

The Flora of Virginia Project: By 2010 we should have newly illustrated *Flora of Virginia*. John Clayton published the only other Flora of Virginia document in 1739 written in Latin. Marion Lobstein is interested in any possibilities that can connect *Flora* to the classroom. She also would

like to produce a video with any interested partner. Donations for the *Flora of Virginia* Project can be sent to The Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project, Inc.; P.O. Box 512; Richmond, VA 23218-0512. Ann Regn serves on the Board of this Project.

Marion Lobstien also developed a CD with her students five years ago called **Ecology of the Chesapeake Bay**. Marion has been posting many of her powerpoints on-line. She mentioned that Impatica software can convert huge powerpoints to something less than 1 MB for ease in downloading from the internet.

Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP): Shelby Laubhan is a fellow at the CBP office in Annapolis. She supports the work of the Education Workgroup and its Teams.

The Website Team was responsible for meeting the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement goal to have an education website developed by 2001. Chessie was developed to meet this demand. The CBP has decided to create a website of its own that will be database driven. Shelby is actively compiling ideas from different jurisdictions. CBP's IT section will develop the new site. They are waiting for a new person to be hired to coordinate this one site.

The Marketing Team has been on hold until the website plans are finalized.

The Tracking Team has asked one representative from each state to fill out a questionnaire that will help CBP figure out a tracking mechanism. Eric Rhoades is the Virginia representative. The next step will be a similar process to figure out a valid reporting process.

Shannon Sprague oversees the Evaluation Team. They are working to determine how effective the MWE experiences are in each state.

The next CBP Education Summit will be in 2005. It is initially planned for April 2005 in PA, but they are still looking into logistics and funding issues. The focus will be on field trips to schools that are implementing Meaningful Bay Experiences.

Katie Register: Longwood has received a 600-acre farm now called the Hull Springs Farm/ Ames Center 6 miles upstream from the Bay with two tidal creeks. It is in Westmoreland County. The site includes 400 acres of timberland managed for revenue in the past, which is being converted to a wildlife habitat management scenario. Most of the forest is currently loblolly pine plantation. Katie is interested to know who would use this site besides Longwood. Archeology, botany, and other classes from Longwood are already making use of property. Longwood feels that the biggest potential is for EE. Buildings on site include a family home, guest cottage, cabin, and two bunkhouses. Ann Regn is on the Feasibility Study Committee. They are thinking of a 4-H camp scenario for the final facility. Longwood is looking for partners. They are starting to work on a business plan. Surveys of bird and bat populations have been completed. Barry suggested an inventory of other similar centers in the area. The center can accommodate a class of 26 students right now.

Canaan Valley Institute: The Institute encompasses lands in VA, WV, PA, MD. Nicole is in the Staunton office. They are a non-advocacy and non-profit group that helps with community groups. They have EPA funding of \$5,000 per grant for community projects such as Team Estanosa. They have an Outreach/Education Team that does workshops. This team is looking at ways to fill gaps in EE needs such as an EE Gazetteer. The Institute also has a GIS/Remote Sensing Team, and Administrative Team. Other people in the Staunton office are Steve Talley, Carol Quay, and Irene Miller.

SUMMER PROGRAMS UPDATE

Bill Portlock spoke about this year's **Chesapeake Bay Academy**. They are hoping for an enrollment of 50 teachers. The Academy will itself be structured as a meaningful field investigation, i.e. start with curriculum work, move on to field work in tidal marshes, present data, time at Port Isabel, Tangier Island, underwater grasses, oyster reefs, salt marshes. Curricula include WET, WILD, WAVE, and Aquatic WILD. There are four spots left if you know any interested teachers. There are plans for one more Academy funded in 2005 through the current BWET grant. Randy Shank continues to coordinate this event. Please contact Bill or Randy with your questions. The camp is open to teachers statewide.

Sixth Grade Science Standard Institutes include Aquatic WILD, WET, *Healthy Water, Healthy People* curriculum supplements. Participants also receive a small implementation grant for the classroom. The DOE Region 5 institutes are not quite full. Suggestions for future event publicity included marketing to pre-service educators and home-school educators.

Denny Casey described **VSSI**, which will take place at Twin Lakes State Park this July. Every 4th-6th grade science SOL is covered at some point during the week. Information is available on the DOE, VMNH and VaNaturally websites. Deadline was May 25, but there are still 8 spots available.

Woods, Water, and Wildlife will hopefully become an annual event sponsored by the DGIF. The institute will make use of VCU's new Rice Center. Each teacher can use a \$600 stipend for his/her choice of equipment, travel expenses, or tuition.

Others:

Tamra Willis will be holding workshops for the Covington and Alleghany teachers.

Jennifer Buff reported that the CRC has added new schools to their biodiversity project from MD and PA.

Jeff Kirwan mentioned that the second half of the Shenandoah NOAA grant training still has 5 spaces available if anyone is interested in attending. It takes place June 21-22 at JMU. The focus was on land-use change over time in last session. This time they will focus on a stream study using GIS/GPS. Jeff's NOAA project uses USAPhotomaps software, which is free on the internet.

Ann mentioned that DEQ is launching a web-based water quality monitoring site.
<http://gisweb.deq.state.va.us/>

Barry and Jeff noted that a group of Virginians attended a Master Naturalist workshop in Missouri that examined Texas's Master Naturalist program.

Submitted by Lisa Deaton
6 pages
Jan. 10, 2005